



Montgomery County Council

For Immediate Release

October 30, 2001

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COUNTY COUNCIL OVERWHELMINGLY SUPPORTS INNER PURPLE LINE

***Glendening decision supported by Council, Corridor Cities Transitway
also gets nod to relieve I-270 congestion***

The Montgomery County Council today voted overwhelmingly to support construction of an Inner Purple Line Metro that would run from Bethesda to Silver Spring, Langley Park, the University of Maryland and New Carrollton, linking County residents with job opportunities while expanding transportation options to fight traffic congestion.

The 7 to 2 vote came one day after Governor Glendening expressed the state of Maryland's strong support for the Inner Line at a boisterous Langley Park rally. The Inner Line won overwhelming support from the Montgomery County Planning Board, strong support from the County's Transportation Policy Task Force, and strong support as well from the County's business and Latino communities.

The Inner Line has also won the support of DC mayor Anthony Williams and Congressman Albert Wynn, from much of Prince George's County, and from state legislators in both Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

"The message is clear: Montgomery County wants the Inner Purple Line," said Council President Blair Ewing. "Our unified recommendation to the state is critical to gaining our fair share of federal transportation monies when the next federal authorization is made in 2003.

"The train is leaving the station. It's time for everybody to get on board. It's time to get something done for Montgomery families."

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"We are laying the groundwork for the next 20 years in supporting the Inner Line," said Councilmember Derick Berlage.

"The Inner Line is the better of the two because it better serves our employment and educational needs as a County," said Councilmember Michael Subin.

"The Inner Line would serve lots of people at much less cost," said Council President Ewing.

According to state figures, an Inner Line is more than three times cheaper than an Outer Line -- \$1.2 billion for the Inner versus \$4 billion for the outer -- a cost per-mile of \$202 million for the Outer Line as opposed to \$85 million for the inner. The Outer Line would cost \$52.30 per new rider as opposed to \$29.38 per new rider for the Inner Line.

"Because of the huge cost and low cost-effectiveness of the Outer Line, it is extremely likely that the federal government would not approve funds to build it," said Ewing. "The Inner Line is more consistent with the type of rail projects the federal government is currently considering for funding."

The Inner Line links jobs in Bethesda and the 355 and I-270 corridors to Silver Spring and Langley Park, where many employees or potential employees live. The Inner Line has received strong support in the Latino community.

The Inner Line would also contribute to the ongoing redevelopment of Silver Spring, in which the state and county have invested millions of public dollars and would link Silver Spring with Bethesda. And the Inner Line would offer direct access to the University of Maryland in College Park for County students, whether they are adults or fresh out of high school.

The Council also sent a recommendation to the state to accelerate the planning and construction of the Corridor Cities Transitway, a dedicated bus or light rail line that would run down from Clarksburg, through Gaithersburg and Rockville to link up with the Shady Grove Metro. The council also asked the state to study transit improvements to the White Oak and Rock Spring Park areas.

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